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GEOGRAPHICAL LITERATURE AND MAPS

(INCLUDING ACCESSIONS TO THE LIBRARY)

BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTICES

(The size of books is given in inches to the nearest half inch.)

AMERICA

The Making of a Great Canadian Railway [Grand Trunk Pacific Railway]. By Frederick A. Talbot. 349 pp. Map, ill. and index. Seeley, Service & Co., Ltd., London. 16s. 9 x 5½.

A vivid description of the organization and construction of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway based on personal investigation by the author in 1910. Two introductory chapters are devoted to the part played by Charles M. Hays in revitalizing the Grand Trunk Railway by extending it to the Pacific. The remainder of the book deals in detail with the building of the road, the difficulties met with and how they were overcome, the experiences of the surveyors and life in the railroad camps.

Although the book is avowedly "intended for those who are interested in the romantic side of railway-building," a sufficient knowledge of geography as an element of general culture could be expected so that such statements would be impossible as those which ascribe to the "Japanese [*sic*] chinook wind" the equable climate of the northern Pacific coast (p. 35). The condemnation of the government maps (p. 50) on the ground of their inadequacy for the purposes of the railroad engineer reveals, too, a lack of appreciation of their scope. Again, although the text deals at length with the means by which the mountain barrier was overcome, the accompanying map places the Rocky Mountains along the axis of the Interior Plateau of British Columbia, in no causal relation with Mt. Robson and Yellowhead Pass, both of which are represented on the map.

Nevertheless, the book is on the whole valuable, mainly because it furnishes information, otherwise not readily available, concerning an undertaking of far-reaching importance.

W. L. G. J.

The Pan American Union. Peace, Friendship, Commerce. By John Barrett, Director-General of the Pan American Union, Washington, D.C., 1911. 254 pp. Ills. \$1. 8½ x 6½.

A handbook of information on the Southern republics, their resources, population, area, commerce and progress; and the work, scope and history of the Pan American Union. The book is well illustrated.

Down North on The Labrador. By Wilfred T. Grenfell. 229 pp. Ills. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York, 1911. \$1. 7½ x 5.

This is a collection of sketches and stories by Dr. Grenfell. The stories are well written and entertaining, although they are open to the criticism that the characters are idealized. The book gives an admirable picture of the life along this barren coast with the constant struggle against great odds. The winter in all its severity, expeditions for relief during all kinds of weather, now

and then a comparison with more favored conditions and above all the simple faith of these brave men and women whose lives are unending battles against the hardships of an inhospitable land and a changing sea, form the themes of most of the stories.

R. M. BROWN.

AFRICA

Notre Beau Niger. Par Félix Dubois. 299 pp. Map and illustrations. E. Flammarion, Paris, 1911. 5 Fr. 8 x 5.

This is an account of fifteen years of French colonization in the Sudan and especially along the Niger River. The journey of the author began at Algiers. The first stage of his travels was across the Sahara to Gao on the Niger. The account of the author's wanderings in the desert region is reserved evidently for another volume, "*L'énigme du Sahara*," advertised to appear soon. The second stage of the journey begins at Gao, and, after various stops along the way, ends at Bammako, far up the Niger. The author is a firm believer in the possibilities of the French Sudan, and the reader must be constantly on guard lest he be swept along by the enthusiasm of the writer and thereby expect to find in this portion of Africa the sole example of great achievement in colonization. Some of the author's extravagances may be accounted for by understanding that it seems necessary to him to overcome considerable opposition in his native land, where many have been taught that the French Sudan is one of the more refined parts of the lower regions. Dubois reports the country as yielding nothing to the Nile country in promise. In this spirit the author visits and recounts the present conditions of the towns of Gao, Kabara, Timbuktu, Mopti, Djenné and finally Bammako. In the chapter on Kabara, the port of Timbuktu, there is an account of the postal service of the country and an interesting comparison of the conditions of former journeys, replete with tragedy, from Kabara to Timbuktu and the journey to-day with all its comforts along a beautiful and comfortable highway, "*le Boulevard et le Bois de Boulogne de Tombouctou*." The chapters on Timbuktu describe the life there, and in dealing with the past the old account of the discovery of Timbuktu by Robert Adams is rehearsed, which the author discredits, characterizing the action of Adams as a "bluff." The volume contains, besides the details of the journey, many interesting things, such as the construction of the hotel at Kulikoro in a manner to withstand the ravages of the ants, the railroads already constructed, for which the author has excessive praise, the projected lines, an interesting account of the introduction and production of cotton and a Sudanese school.

R. M. BROWN.

Erwachende Agrarländer. Nationallandwirtschaft in Ägypten und im Sudan unter englischem Einflusse. Von Siegfried Strakosch. xii and 235 pp. Map. Verlagsbuchhandlung Paul Parey, Berlin, 1910. M. 7.

The "agricultural countries in process of awakening" of which the author speaks are Egypt and the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. He discusses the possibilities of these two countries from the point of view of what he calls *national agriculture*, that is to say, in judging the agricultural status of a country he first examines the natural conditions which the agricultural methods must meet in order to be successful, and then determines the value of those methods, not by their degree of up-to-dateness according to modern European standards but by the degree in which they are adapted to those natural conditions. Taking the plough for an example, he shows that the quasi-antediluvian instrument which the